Rome March 2d 1824

My dear Father

My first time was sent to Ancona for the Kings Messenger to convey it to the Royal Academy in London — now if you will in the first place get leave and request the Porter to send it on to Somerset Street immediately on its arrival and then have it put on to the Charming frame exactly as you did the last — conveying it to the Royal Academy precisely the same as before — but if it should arrive a short time before the time for viewing the Pictures for the Exhibition — which is some day the 1st & 2nd of April — then send it on one of the days for the purpose of exhibiting — with this inscription on the back of the Frame (not the Canvas) and in a letter to the Secretary R. Howard Esqr "Greek Shepherds rescuing a Lamb from a Vulture — J. Severn. Rome" or W.m Boxall Esqr J. Newman Esqr Salford Esqr" — I shall write by this post to Mr Bond asking the favor of this reference to him — if the picture should arrive after the receiving time — why I suppose it must remain until after the Exhibition for the first Council that may meet — I am not sure about the time it went in or even if it is gone — its was to be taken by the first Messenger going from Ancona — they are going continually so that I hope it is arrived — another thing is it may be stoped at Dover but in that case the Messr.s would give notice at the R.A. — if this should be the case I would consult Mr Alger — a letter sent on to Dover telling them that it is a Picture by the Student of the R.A. and now sent from Rome for the Inspection of the Council. — He will immediately liberate it. Perhaps you had better consult Mr Bond in any difficulty that may appear respecting the Varnishing — there is no difficulty — be careful to get Mastic Varnish — the picture should be well cleaned with a Sponge and Water first and then when it is well dryed put on the Varnish — which the Bricker the better — I wish we had you sitting down to dinner with us — Lord how jolly we'd be — Ever your's affectionately John Keats

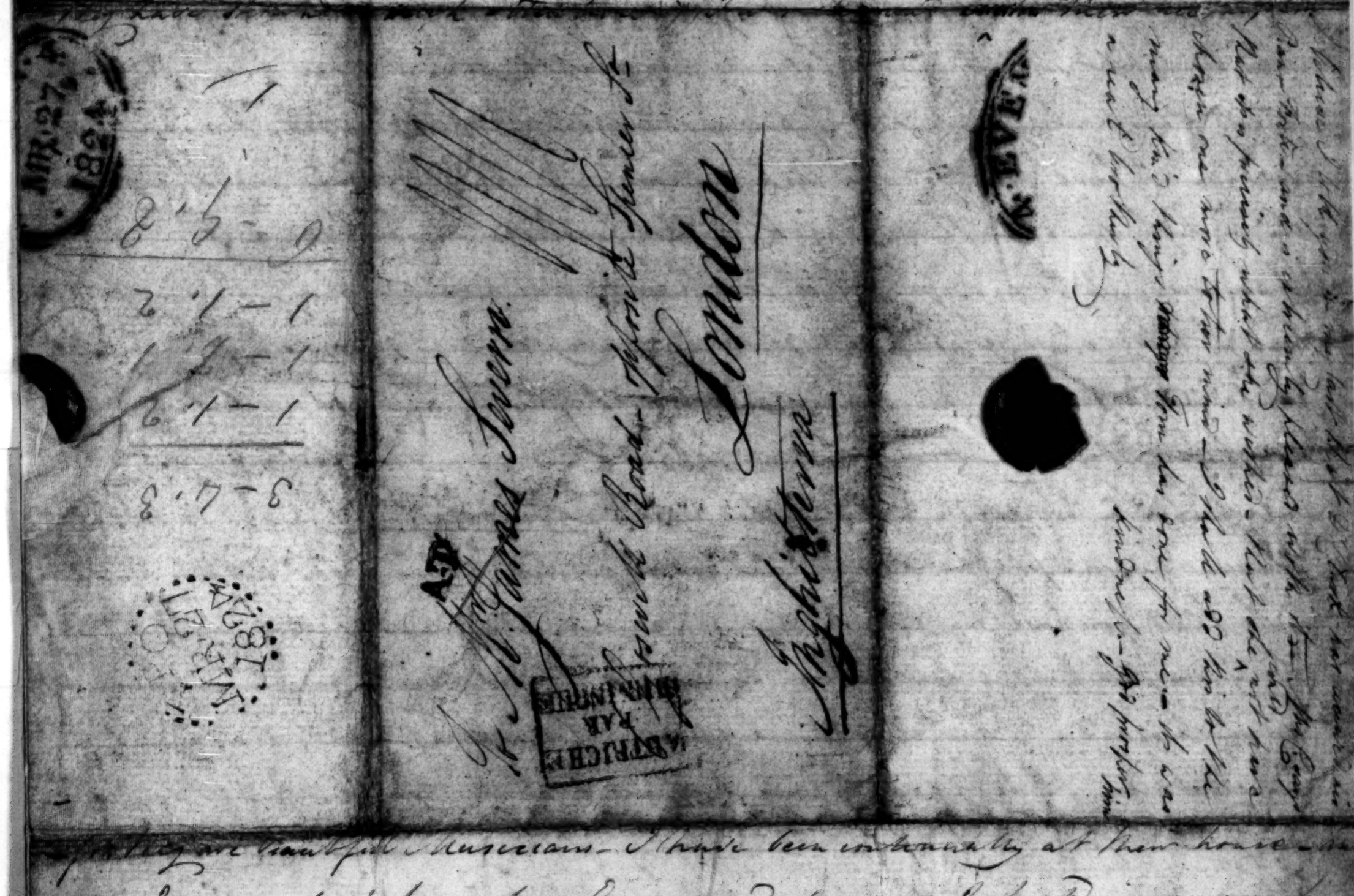
(read the letter quite through before you read this page) the last page to read

Now tell me – and think well of it first – and all of you talk together – whether his visits would be a change for my good or not? I cannot think but I am born for a Domestic life and in its comfort I am another being – (mind I should tell you that this Lady has a small fortune – enough for herself and is of rather a fine family in Scotland) – Mr Brown tells me this would be very bad – it would interrupt my studies as my life is still unsettled – but however I shall be guided entirely by what you say – for when I am with you I look to you immediately – make up your mind decidedly – for I am serious – but be secret – I wish never pardon you if you speak of it to others ——
– I am now painting a picture of Ferdinand and Miranda playing at chess in the cave it is the size of the Shepherds – This Lady is introduced as Miranda – We have had a very gay Winter here – The English Nobility have performed English Plays twice a week in the finest possible style – but all were excluded who we call Gentry except some few highly favored Artists – among who I have been – it has been a great pity indeed. —— My kind friend Mr Brown is sick with me – and I think owing to him I have had my health and so much comfort – he has stood Cook all the Winter – in the Summer he leaves me to live in Florence with Mr Bond – My poor friend Mr Gott is again bad with the Fever – I am certainly fortunate to have escaped this fever so far God protect me – So now my dear Sarah I have had my say – you will remain in my mind one of my dearest comforts – in my vicissitudes whether I am with or without you – but it is only the first on which my existence depends that keeps me from England or I should set off immediately on the finish of my Picture to be one more in the dear Society of my Brothers & Sisters. – I'll tell you how I should like him to dine with me in a Room that is entirely covered with my pictures – with a beautiful view from – and the jolly chat of Mr Bond – Wine at 18s a bottle – Beef at 2s 6d lb. and a fine pleasing fading whisk extra shilling
after to all & provide my dear Sarah – ever your faithful and affectionate Joseph

My dear Sarah

Your kind offers to me alone would tempt me home to England.
your letter has cost me many tears - but tears of pleasure - when I think of my
Sisters and Brothers I thank God for his greatest gifts I seem to live for you
all - and shape my course of life by consulting you all in my heart of hearts - but
Ah! how many things may I mistake - so distant from you and in South, so
different - it will be difficult for me to give you an answer about my
return - except it is to be regulated by my health which I see you all have
great fears about - Now I am in the most perfect health, perhaps more
so than I have been for the last 8 years - I have regained my strength I
am in high spirits - That attack of the Jaundice arose from a cold - yet
I am subject to a slight fever complaint which more or less I now find
that I have always had - This Jaundice coming on proved so now Dr Clark has
explained and made me understand how I may be always well - I have
now been 3 Months trying this new plan - it is very simple and certainly
infallible in its good effects - this is it - eating little - particularly to
prevent heaviness after dinner - I am astonished at the good effects of this
- so that you see my health being secured I cannot say when I return
for I am making a connection here among the Nobility which I could not
do in England - I am executing a number of works at a less cost - and in
my quiet here - I am planning and preparing a new walk of Art on which
my future life will depend - It is likely I may remain all next year -
that is if no change takes place in my life - You know I love to tell
you all things - because I would not do any thing to make you unhappy
- or not one of you - Now mind this is advice I ask of you in secret among
yourselves - you will give me great pain if you let it go beyond your own little
circle - you may tell Father - I would wish to have his opinion - Well then

what would you all say and feel if I were to marry? for I am state deprived
in love — for my interest it would be well — but it might seperate me from a
you — the Lady is English, she has a Mother and a Sister — but I will tell you
how this love has stolen on me — I have travelled with these Ladies twice and
situated as I am from the comfort of home — seeing only splendid Misfortunes among
Brother Artists — why I found a charm in the society of these kind Ladies — that
they resembled my own dear Sisters in their unassuming character and kind heart
showing to



they are beautiful Musicians — I have been continually at their house —
and I go regularly here of an Evening and draw as I should in my own house
we generally sing some Glees and altogether I find a touch of that real
English comfort which how can I insert — now I have ceased to try —
— my Miranda is about 24 — very beautiful — but it is not her beauty so much as
certain amiableness and gentleness of character — that has stole away my heart *